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Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment Safety and Occupational Health visits Oahu to address community concerns

U.S. Army, Pacific Public Affairs Office

FORT SHAFTER, HI -- The U.S. Army, on behalf of the Department of Defense (DoD), will meet this week with representatives of state and federal agencies, the Waianae Neighborhood Board and community members to address community concerns about military munitions present at Ordnance Reef off the Waianae Coast.

According to Tad Davis, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment Safety and Occupational Health, the decision on how to respond to the military munitions present at Ordnance Reef will not be unilateral, but one made in collaboration with federal and state agencies, and affected local communities.

"These discussions will provide the input for consideration in developing a course of action that best addresses community concerns and any risks these munitions may pose to human health and the environment," Davis said.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released the report of its survey of Ordnance Reef to DoD and the public in late March 2007. At DoD's request, NOAA, in cooperation with the University of Hawaii, surveyed Ordnance Reef between May 28 to June 10, 2006 to assess the extent of the military munitions there, collected sediment and fish samples, and conducted chemical analyses of the samples.

The Army remains committed to ensuring the health and human safety of the local community and the environment and stresses that munitions encountered by the public should never be touch or handled.

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MEDIA NOTE: Tad Davis will conduct a media roundtable on the subject of his visit on Thursday, May 24, at 10 a.m. at Fort Shafter. Media interested in attending should contact Les Ozawa, U.S. Army Pacific chief of media relations at 438-6347 by 4 p.m., Wednesday, May 23. Media should be at Fort Shafter's Buckner Gate by 9:30 a.m. to be escorted to the roundtable.